

1110059471

Hon. David Emery

Form 10-300 (Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maine
 COUNTY: York
 FOR NPS USE ONLY
 ENTRY DATE: APR 28 1975

1. NAME

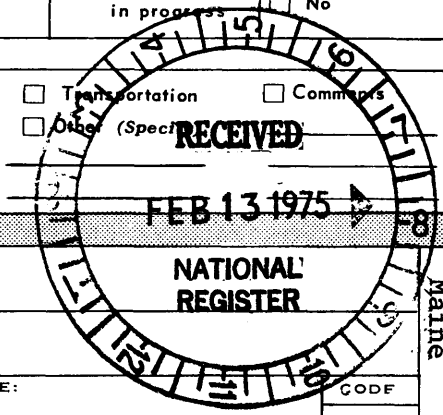
COMMON: The Temple
 AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Temple Ave. in Ocean Park
 CITY OR TOWN: Old Orchard Beach CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First
 STATE: Maine CODE: 23 COUNTY: York CODE: 031

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Ocean Park Association
 STREET AND NUMBER: Ocean Park
 CITY OR TOWN: STATE: Maine CODE: 23

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: York County Registry of Deeds, Alfred, Maine
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN: Alfred STATE: Maine CODE: 23

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
 DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Temple at Ocean Park, Maine's only octagonal church, was built in the summer of 1881. The design was obtained at a cost of \$27.50 from the architectural firm of Dow and Wheeler, of whom nothing is known. Erected in less than three months (June 6 to August 1, 1881) by the Portland builder James Bickford, the Temple cost \$3,500. The building was dedicated on August 2, 1881, and has seen continuous summer use since its opening.

The Temple is octagonal in shape, stands two stories high, and has a hipped roof which meets in a cupola. The foundation of the building is comprised of brick piers, while the remainder is of frame construction.

The facade or south wall of the Temple is composed of three bays. The central bay projects from the main building, is two stories high, and has a double gable roof. The first story contains a pair of door, while the second story has a double window. Between the doorway and the window hangs a now illegible sign. In front of the steps which lead to the doorway once stood an arched sign bearing the inscription "The Way of Truth." The building is still identified in the town records as The Way of Truth Temple. To the left and right of the projecting central bay is a window.

The facade is flanked on either side by a wall which contains a door and a window.

The east and west walls of the Temple are almost identical in design to the facade. Of their three bays, the central one projects from the main building, is two stories high, and has a single gable roof. The first story contains a pair of doors, while the second story has a double window.

The two walls between the east and west walls and the north wall each have two windows. From the north wall projects a one story subsidiary storage area. The octagonal cupola has eight windows which are covered by louvered shutters.

The interior of the Temple is a large open area. A speaking platform is located at the north wall, and the remainder of the space is devoted to seating. Many of the buildings original wooden settees and chairs are still in use.

On both its exterior and interior, "The Way of Truth" Temple is a stark, barn-like structure which, in a sense, is a wooden embodiment of the revival tent. The Temple is the kind of seaside religious assembly hall which usually survives only in century-old stereoptican views and souvenir booklets. Yet this 19th century American summer institution continues to flourish in Ocean Park, Maine.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1881

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Temple is the focal point of Ocean Park, a family style summer community not entirely unlike Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts or Ocean Grove, New Jersey, with a religious background to make it a desirable summer resort. Very few of these denominational reservations, so prevalent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, still exist and among them Ocean Park is perhaps the least changed from its original plan and purpose.

Facing Saco Bay, dotted with islands, and extending from Prout's Neck on the north to Fletcher's Neck on the south, Ocean Park fronts on part of an eight mile sandy beach.

The idea of the community was inaugurated in July of 1880 at the Centennial Conference of Free Will Baptists at the Wiers on the shore of Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire. It was certainly inspired in part by the Chautauqua movement, founded in 1874, and based on education and self-improvement within the Christian context. The thought expressed at the Wiers was embodied in the question, "Why may we not have a Wiers on the seacoast, where we may spend our vacations with profit both to soul and body, and not be subject to the rowdyism common at seaside resorts, where many of us have spent the summer seasons?"

A committee report of Oct. 1, 1880 suggested favorable consideration of property on Old Orchard Beach and the Ocean Park charter was approved in January, 1881 "to establish a place of summer resort for holding religious, educational, and other meetings..."

The property was purchased and during the next summer land was cleared, marshy spots filled and street work petitioned from the Town of Saco, (Old Orchard Beach, as a separate town, had not yet been incorporated.) Building was begun and a number of cottages were completed. Importantly the governing regulations contained no mention of race or creed in requirements for ownership of property. However, the restrictions on use of property, long before the advent of zoning, have served to prevent Ocean Park from becoming overcrowded and unduly commercialized like many resorts.

One of the first acts of the directors following the organization of the Ocean Park Association was to request plans for a "pavilion." They favored an octagonal design which they had seen in the White Mountains. (See Continuation Sheets)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adelbert M. Jakeman, The Story of Ocean Park, Ocean Park 1956
 Orson S. Fowler, The Octagon House, New York 1973 (reprint)

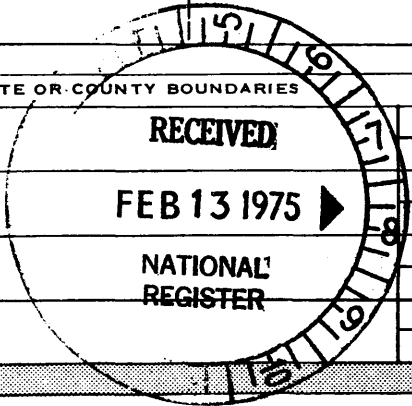
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		43° 30' 8" N	70° 23' 22" W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



19/387680
4817320
60

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Frank A. Beard - Preservationist
 Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. - Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION: Maine Historic Preservation Commission DATE: 1/9/75

STREET AND NUMBER: 31 Western Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Augusta STATE: Maine CODE: 23

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: James H. Mundy
 Title: State Historic Preservation Officer
 Date: February 6, 1975

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

A. R. Martensen
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/28/75

ATTEST:
W. Mundy
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: APR 24 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Maine	
COUNTY	
York	
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	APR 28 1975

(Number all entries)

8 Significance

This architectural conception was the brain child of Orson Squire Fowler, that remarkable phrenologist and multi-faceted mid-nineteenth century man who, although not a trained architect, promoted and made popular this type of construction through his book, *The Octagon House*, published in 1848. Fowler advocated this space saving and light increasing design not only for houses but for almost all other types of building including churches. Said Fowler, "To impress an audience, a speaker requires that they be gathered all around him, except at his back, where the choir should be located. The octagon form secures this end perfectly." And further, "The octagon form also facilitates the congregation's seeing one another, and thereby the interchange of friendly and benignant feelings toward one another: mark this point." Evidently the directors did!

What came to be called the "Temple" was designed by the firm of Dow and Wheeler, built by James Bickford of Portland and dedicated on August 2, 1881. It is the only religious structure in Maine designed in the octagon form.

Ocean Park has thrived over the years and a great variety of programs have flourished. The public assemblies in the Temple have provided all kinds of entertainment including first run motion pictures. Sunday services are conducted by eminent theologians and preachers of many denominations.

The Temple represents an unusual, but once popular, architectural form and is unique among Maine churches. It also symbolizes an ongoing commitment to an admirable nineteenth century ideal.

